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Making the Grade #23: The Call of Fall. Also: A Surfeit of Doilies

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Traditionally, the fall is the most active season in the rare coin hobby. The distractions of outdoor activities that tempted us in the summer fade away as the temperature cools (unless you live in Southern California or elsewhere where it is

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always warm and pleasant. If so, I just don't wanna hear about it).

While the Internet has made coin collecting more of a year round activity in recent years, it is still true that coin activity perks up and stays that way until late winter. To keep you indoors and thinking about coins, I've done my part by putting together a list of new coins that includes many collector favorites.

There's a small group of coins from a fresh collection of proof Indian cents, all housed in the PCGS "Doily" holders used for a very short time in the late 1980's by that grading service. Plus: gold doubloons, a top grade pattern, an error coin, some historic early medals, some contemporary counterfeits. And of course plenty of "normal" coins too. Enjoy!

Learning from Our Neighbors to the North

This is only tangentially related to collecting rare coins, but I can stay silent no longer.

I recently returned from a trip to Canada. Let me tell you - our Northern neighbors really do coins and currency the right way.

The "paper" currency they have - which actually is a thin, colorful polymer (= plastic) - looks like it came directly from the future. It features clear windows, a couple of holograms, different sizes for each denomination and so on. It made the US currency next to it in my wallet feel inadequate and ashamed.

Not to be outdone solely by the currency, the Canadians have got it all over us with their coinage system too.

Yes - they have dollar coins, and two dollar coins that no one could possibly confuse with their quarters. And people actually use them. They use them all the time, in fact. With nearly every transaction.

Now be honest - when was the last time you received even one US dollar coin in change? I thought so. And if you tried to spend it, I bet you had to give the recipient a little speech about how it is not a quarter or a Chuck E. Cheese token.

They have completely eliminated the dollar bill in Canada. Don't worry though; I'm sure the lobbyists for their currency suppliers all got new and better jobs doing something more productive with their talents, such as - well --- ANYTHING else.

Lastly- no more one cent coins! They round up or round down to the nearest nickel automatically.

And you know what? No one was thrown into abject poverty from all of the "rounding up" (which - obviously - was counterbalanced by all of the "rounding down" anyway).

No one rioted as a result of losing their beloved one cent coins and one dollar bills. Our gentle and wise Northern cousins likely wouldn't put on a very good riot anyway. Perhaps they would tip over a recycling bin or two, then very quickly upright them and tidy up.

Now down here in the good old USA- we know how to riot. Yessiree! We have a proud tradition of senseless mayhem and destruction. But perhaps I've digressed.

Kudos to Canada! And as for America? For shame.

We can do way better than we have been. Canada has already worked out all the kinks for us. All that is left to do is to copy what they did, reap the huge annual financial savings and move on to the next challenge.

I'll return my soapbox to the back of the storage room now.

On to the NewP's

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Author

Dave Wnuck

Professional Numismatists Guild (PNG) member since 2006. Member of all major numismatic organizations. Dave is a contributor to the Redbook, as well as a member of the PCGS Board of Experts.

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As in my previous newsletters, these coins are the items I have gathered over the last few weeks. The plan is to upload all these coins to my website. In the meantime, readers of this newsletter will be the very first to lay eyes on these offerings. By popular demand, I've included photos of the coins where I have them.

The "Making the Grade" Featured Coin –

1880-S Morgan Dollar. PCGS graded MS68 CAC [ogn].

As close to perfection as you are likely to see in the Morgan Dollar series. Even better, the coin has been verified for grade by CAC. Still better even than that, the coin is housed in a 30 year old "OGH" green tag holder, so you know for certain that it is stable and likely to look exactly as it does now in another 3 decades. \$5750.

New Purchases

1652 Oak Tree Shilling. NGC graded AU50. Ex. Donald Partrick.

Noe-6, Salmon 4-D, considered to be rarity-7. A high grade specimen of this extremely rare variety. Rich gray-gold toning over velvety luster. It is important to realize that we are in the midst of a once-in-generation turnover of great colonial coin collections. Just as long-time colonial specialists fondly look back at the 1980's as a period of unprecedented opportunity to buy great coins at very reasonable prices, so too we will look back on this period and marvel at the opportunities presented to us. Take this coin, for example. Mr. Partrick, who assembled what is likely greatest colonial collection of all time, purchased this coin in 1998 for \$18,700. His original envelope states that fact (purchased from the Stack's auction of Reed Hawn's Massachusetts silver, 5/1998). Now 17 years later I am able to offer it for a little more than half that. Just remarkable. \$9950.

1652 Oak Tree Shilling. PCGS graded VF30 CAC.

Noe-12 die variety, Salmon 9a-Fii, considered to be High Rarity-6. A perfectly centered and well preserved example of this rare die variety. Full weight (71.29 grains), with every design element visible, and sporting old-time gray toning. \$6250.

1652 Pine Tree Shilling. PCGS graded VF35 CAC.

Small planchet type. Noe-15, Salmon 1-A, considered to be rarity 5. Light gray toning and well struck. \$9750.

1840 Braided hair Large Cent. PCGS graded MS62 BN.

Large Date. Medium chocolate brown in color, with pleasing and uniform luster. Quite lovely. \$695.

1879 Indian Cent. PCGS graded Proof-64 Brown. CAC.

A green monster! Color fanatics in both copper and in silver coins covet the rare vibrant green toners. See the PCGS TrueView images for a detailed look of this coin. [Note that the slab needs to be re-stickered by CAC. This coin was recently reholdered]. \$1450.

1890 Indian Cent. PCGS graded Proof-65 Red & Brown [DOILY Holder].

A choice specimen that is free of spots and retains lots of eye appeal. \$875.

1895 Indian Cent. PCGS graded Proof 64 Brown [DOILY Holder].

A touch of lime green toning mixes with ruby red, aqua and gold toning to give this coin exceptional eye appeal. \$750.

1897 Indian Cent. PCGS graded Proof-64 Brown [Two Piece Transitional PCGS holder].

With a colorful mix of shades similar to the 1895 cent above (in fact, it hails from the same set as the Doily holdered cents in this offering), it is seemingly undergraded by today's standards. \$750.

1898 Indian Cent. PCGS graded Proof-64 Red & Brown [DOILY holder].

Gently faded red over mirrored fields. \$695.

1901 Indian Cent. PCGS graded Proof 64 Red & Brown [Two Piece Transitional PCGS holder].

A ring of green-blue-ruby-red rings the obverse, while the reverse is a more uniform faded red. The last of the Indian cent proofs from the recently disbursed old-time set. \$750.

1867 Two Cent Piece. NGC graded MS64 Red & Brown, CAC.

Nearly full mint red on the obverse, and perhaps 75% red on the reverse. A very beautiful example of this decidedly oddball denomination. \$475.

1866 Shield Nickel, with Rays. Large Obverse Cud Error. NGC graded MS62.

The first year they struck five cent pieces in nickel. Nickel is a hard metal, and the Philadelphia mint had a tough time making coins with it. It is obvious they had some trouble making this particular coin. That big, honkin' cud on the obverse is proof of that. \$1750.

1832 Bust Half Dime. NGC graded MS61.

LM-5 die variety. Light golden gray toning. From the famous Jules Reiver collection, as stated on the slab. \$475.

1834 Bust Half Dime. PCGS graded AU53.

LM-2 die variety, considered to be rarity-1. Flashy luster under blue and golden toning. Lots of coin for the money. \$295.

1833 Bust Dime. PCGS graded AU-55.

High 3. JR-5, considered to be rarity-1. Green-blue toning that fades to deep gold. \$785.

1822 Bust Quarter. PCGS graded F15.

Browning-1, considered to be rarity-2. Choice surfaces and color; medium golden gray in color with toning that deepens as it approaches the rims. A surprisingly difficult date in this popular series. \$695.

1892 Barber Quarter. PCGS graded MS64.

This lovely near gem sports a killer concentric rainbow toning pattern on the reverse. \$595

1917 Standing Liberty Quarter, Type 1. PCGS graded MS65 Full Head, CAC.

A blush of light gold toning over pristine surfaces. Fresh from a high end US type set. \$1150.

1810 Bust Half Dollar. PCGS graded VF35.

Overton-101, considered to be rarity-1. A beautiful and crusty example of this early date. If the clown character on *The Simpsons* animated TV show collected coins, it is likely he would add this coin to his set (as his full name is Krusty Krustofsky). And somehow he might want to have some coins that, um, remind him of his name. I guess. Hey, work with me here, people!). \$350.

1823 Bust Half Dollar. PCGS graded AU50 [ogh].

Overton-106a die variety, considered to be rarity-2. Sometimes called the tampered '3' variety, and occasionally called the "poor man's broken 3". I guess you can glean from those nicknames that the gentlemen who punched the date into the die back in '23 was not the most skilled of artisans. This specimen is flashy and basically untoned, with faint golden toning near the rims. \$875.

1833 Bust Half Dollar. PCGS graded AU50 CAC.

Quite lovely, with blue and gold toning over lustrous surfaces. \$595.

1859 Half Dollar Pattern. NGC graded Proof-66+ CAC.

Judd-241, considered to be rarity-4. CAC has only verified 3 coins in all grades. Not surprisingly, this is the single finest in the CAC population report. It is also the single highest graded coin from both NGC and PCGS. A lot of value for just... \$5500.

1902 Barber Half Dollar. NGC graded Proof-66 Cameo.

A vibrant crescent of blue-green-gold-red toning on the obverse, while the reverse is toned in light gold. \$4400.

1871 Seated Dollar. NGC graded AU50.

Lovely original surfaces with some cartwheel luster peeking out under old-timey toning. Nearly all AU seated dollars have been scrubbed up to one degree or another; it is nice to come across one that has not been mistreated in that

fashion. \$975.

World Coinage

1739 Mexico 8 Escudos Gold. NGC graded AU55.

Mexico City mint; MF assayer. Rich russet-gold in color, and a very well made coin for being one of the first years of milled coinage. Yes – this was pirate money, but it was so much more than that. These 8 escudos played a major role in the merchant commerce in what would become the U.S. of A. So fine, and so historic. \$4850.

1750 Mexico 8 Escudos Gold. NGC graded AU53.

Mexico City mint, MF assayer. A gorgeous, high grade example of this early gold doubloon. Slightly prooflike and with a hint of russet toning to give it character. \$4850.

1789 Columbia 8 Escudos Gold. NGC graded MS61.

Nuevo Reino, JJ assayer. Obverse inscription reads, "CAROL IV". While some "MS-61" graded coins from both NGC and PCGS may show a little rub, this coin is all there, with lots of frosty luster to boot. \$2600.

Exonumia, Flotsam & Jetsam

"1652" Large Planchet Pine Tree Shilling - Counterfeit. Fine [uncertified].

An attractive and fairly deceptive example. Cast from a genuine Noe-1 pine tree shilling, it has the unusual characteristic of having the same wavy planchet as the genuine article. When I have seen cast counterfeits in the past, they have all been perfectly flat. Attractively toned as well. \$175.

1792-dated Liberte Francoise Medal. NGC graded MS64.

Maz.-318. An example of the famous French brass medal, obviously inspired by the Libertas Americana medal struck a decade before. Popular with collectors of early American coinage due to the similarity of the design to half cents and large cents that came shortly after. This particular medal is the highest quality specimen I have seen to date. They just don't come nice; this specimen is not at all rough and granular, as nearly always seen. \$2450.

1795 Great Britain Anti-Slavery Conder Token. Farthing. PCGS graded MS66 BN.

Middlesex, D&H-1118. A heartbreaking design. "AM I NOT A MAN AND A BROTHER" around a kneeling African slave in chains. The reverse wording states, ADVOCATES FOR THE RIGHTS OF MAN around, THOS SPENCE / SIR THOS MORE / THOS PAIN on three lines, date below. Glossy, semi-prooflike and faded red in color with the design slightly frosted in contrast. This specimen is among the choicest examples of this issue in existence. A recent find - fresh from England. \$1875.

"1803" Kettle Token. US Half Eagle Design and Size. PCGS graded AU55.

24.5 mm. Handsome antique brass surfaces with variegated flashes of light gold. This token was issued by Kettle & Sons of Birmingham, England and clearly was designed to imitate the regular issue U.S. Capped Bust, Heraldic Eagle five dollar gold coins. The name "Kettle" appears to the right of the date but is very weak, and the stars are above the name along the curve of the planchet. These were struck with a medalllic alignment and were intended for use as game counters. I suspect that at least some were passed (or were attempted to be passed) as genuine \$5 gold coins. Attractive surfaces and long included in the Judd Pattern reference in Appendix C. \$395.

(1805) Eccleston medal of George Washington. Bronze, NGC graded MS62.

Baker-85., 76 mm, Bronze, rarity-6. A large, imposing medal with a huge, high relief portrait of George Washington. Ranked #24 in Jaeger & Bowers book *100 Greatest American Tokens and Medals*.

Around GENERAL WASHINGTON / INSCRIBED TO HIS MEMORY BY D: ECCLESTON. LANCASTER MDCCCV. Reverse standing Indian, THE LAND WAS OURS / HE LAID THE FOUNDATION OF AMERICAN LIBERTY IN THE XVIII CENTURY. / INNUMERABLE MILLIONS YET UNBORN WILL VENERATE THE MEMORY -- / OF THE MAN WHO OBTAINED THEIR COUNTRY'S FREEDOM.

Many of these medals are microscopically granular (and some NOT so microscopically granular) due to the cast planchets that were used, but not so here. Medium chocolate brown, and smooth, hard and faint ly glossy fields show this medal off to best effect. Much better color, sharpness and definition on this elaborate medal than typically seen. \$1375.

(1813) French Silver Jeton – Uncirculated [uncertified].

OK – I'll admit it. I didn't buy this piece because I am a learned aficionado of early French jetons. (Jetons, for those who aren't familiar with the term, are tokens or medals used in counting, similar to an abacus. They are also used as game pieces, similar to how poker chips are used today. This one is a little larger than a half dollar, and a little thicker). I purchased this because it is an incredibly detailed design, is in exceptional condition, and sports beautiful toning. Many of these are not wildly expensive, and are a fun way to add a 200 year old piece of art to one's collection. \$175.

(circa 1820) Map of the World Medal. NGC graded MS65.

Eimer-1139b. White metal, 51 mm. This is a finest example of this popular and historic medal that I have seen. It is a very accurate and detailed representation of the world as it appeared circa 1820. On the obverse, the Western hemisphere map shows North and South America with land masses and bodies of water labeled as they were known in the early 19th century. These include New Albion in the Western United States, Jugo (much of the southern portion of South America), and the Sandwich Islands (now Hawaii). On the reverse, the Eastern Hemisphere map shows New Holland (Australia), Van Dieman's Land (Tasmania), and Barbary in North Africa (now Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia and Libya) among others. \$1950.

1879 Silver Medal – Hartford CT – Removal of Civil War Connecticut Battle Flags. Uncirculated [uncertified].

On Sept 17th, 1879 there was a ceremony to remove the Civil War Battle Flags from public display in Hartford. A medal was struck for the occasion. I have seen white metal specimens, pot metal specimens with ribbons attached, and silver specimens. This silver example is beautifully toned. \$175

(circa 1893) "Distance from London" Medal. NGC graded MS64.

50 mm, struck in white metal. A curious and fun medal with the obverse showing The Principal Bathing Places of England, with miles distant from London. The exergue reads, "J. Ottley, Medalist Birmingham". To right: Scotch Universities; To left: English. Reverse within circle like the spokes from a bicycle: Miles Distant from London. Between edge and this circle, the names of the principal towns of England. Free of problems and with flashy semi-prooflike surfaces. \$985.

1944 Henning Nickel Counterfeit. No "P" mintmark above the dome. Very Fine [uncertified].

One of the well known counterfeits of the 20th century. Here is my unabashedly brilliant description of one of these from the last time I offered one: "To paraphrase what is said by the bad guy in every episode of Scooby Doo cartoons: 'I would've got away with it too if it wasn't for those meddling kids, er, I mean if I only put the large mintmark on the reverse'. This coin would easily pass muster today if you spent it; Mr. Henning did a very good job, as you can see." \$65.

1944 Henning Nickel Counterfeit. No "P" mintmark above the dome. Very Fine [uncertified].

This a duplicate from the same source as the last. Interestingly, the "R" in PLURIBUS on these fakes is known to have a chunk out of it. This specimen, however, does not have this characteristic. I don't recall seeing one of these "perfect R" specimens. This is important to folks who like these because Mr. Henning made other dates too, and the "broken R" is one way they can be spotted. \$85.

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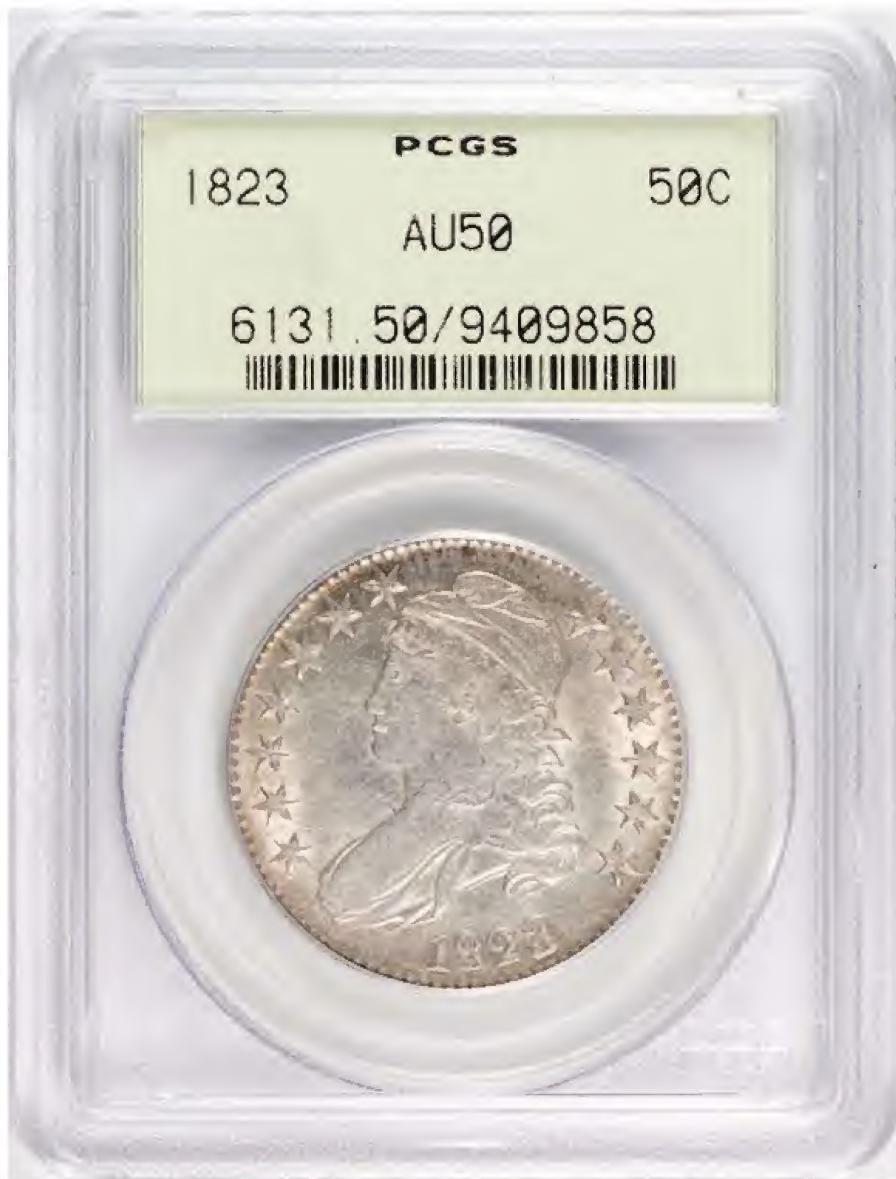
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